

# Ramatuelle



## *The authentic village*

Ramatuelle is a picturesque medieval village that coils around itself and rises out of a natural setting on the buttness of the hill of Paillas. It looks out over the entire Bay of Pampelonne and the agricultural plain, at an altitude of around 130 metres. In short, Ramatuelle is a calm and peaceful village that contrasts with the busier and trendy side of its Pampelonne beach scene.



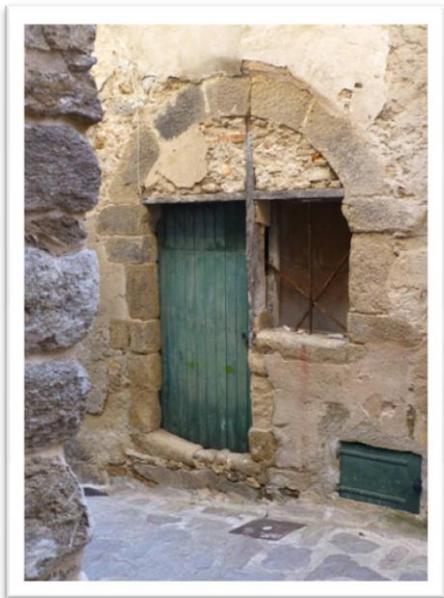
### **The hearth of the village**

The heart of the village has an original snail-like arrangement. The architecture of the village core is typical of Mediterranean villages with porches, staircases,

passages, squares, narrow stony and flowered alleys, plus a church and its bell tower. The ochre facades and pastel shutters are decorated with jasmine, honeysuckle and Bougainvillea, a real treat to awaken our senses. Its craft, painting and primitive arts shops, occupying old cellars dug into the rock, attract a large number of curious visitors every summer.

Its main square has retained its appellation of origin, known as "de l'Ormeau". The Provençal market brings the square to life each Thursday and Sunday, along with its famous bars and restaurants.

## *The hidden treasures*



### **The échoppe**

This house, dating from the end of the 15th century, was a trader's or craftsman's shop. It was built in local granite and was probably fitted with a wooden stall to display the products offered for sale, and a shutter which could be folded down to close the shop. The arch would have included an openwork tympanum, in wood or plaster, to let in the light. The raised doorstep kept out rainwater, as well as rubbish and sewage from the street.



### **The Cercle du Littoral**

It is the oldest association in the municipality. Founded in 1885, it later adopted the by-laws of 1901 type associations with philanthropic purposes. The birth of the 3rd Republic caused a proliferation

of associations from the end of the 19th century. Many of them were "circles" which brought together men (because women and foreigners were not admitted) belonging to the same social stock or to the same line of thinking. They met to read, converse and entertain themselves while consuming at a better price than in other cafes. Almost every municipality had its own, some even had several, since there were more than 300 in the Var at the beginning of the century.

### **The tomb of Gérard Philipe**

Gérard Philipe, French actor, (4 December 1922 - 25 November 1959). The tomb is deliberately of a sober nature, covered with ivy and shaded by a laurel.

Gérard Philipe came to Ramatuelle to his in-laws' house mainly during the holidays with his wife Anne and their two children. The house is not open to visitors. He was present at the inauguration of the Ramatuelle cooperative cellar in September 1959. The school group, inaugurated in 1982 in the presence of Anne Philipe, bears his name.

The actor's presence in the area has created significant tourist interest, as well as cultural interest. The Gérard Philipe Festival was started in 1985 under the direction of Jean-Claude Brialy, and renamed in 1992 Festival de Théâtre et Variétés de Ramatuelle. The current artistic director is Michel Boujenah.

### **L'escalier Eiffel - (The Eiffel staircase)**

Under the Ancien Régime (Old Regime), Place Gabriel Péri was the main square in the village of Ramatuelle. The staircase of the house at n° 2 gives access to one of the dwellings created from the division of the seigniorial château. The so-called Eiffel staircase, dating from 1868, is a sign of modernity. It is made of metal, a rare architectural piece in a small Var village in the 19th century.



## Le lavoir de da Font-D'avaou - (The washhouse of da Font-D'avaou)



La Font-d'Avaou has been known since the 17th century. The source (lou font) is located below the village. It was called Font-d'Abas in the 17th century and fountain Plus-Bas in the 18th century. We do not know when the washhouse was built. It should be remembered that fountains and washhouses were places for socialising, meeting, exchanging, they were theatres for discussion, gossip,

argument, insults and sometimes even brawls.

## *Traces of the past*



placed above a gate.

### **The Saracen Gate**

It has retained its original appearance. From the inside, we can still see the guide for the portcullis, as well as the hinges installed in 1792 to close the two-leaved gate. From the outside, we can see two stone extensions which were used to support a watchtower or gatehouse that was often

### **The old prisons**

These are in the street descending from the bell tower and running along the ramparts. They were built under Napoleon III with such Arabic styling that popular belief has gradually settled on them being a hammam built by the Saracens.





### **Saint-Anne Chapel**

Also called **Chapel of the Penitents**, it is the only one of the four Ramatuelle chapels to have survived. Built in the 16th century, it was long disused and restored during the 1960s. A religious service is celebrated there for the feast of Saint Anne, on 26th July.

### **Notre Dame Church**

The parish church of Ramatuelle is built against the old rampart which surrounded the village. At the end of the 16th century, the parish church of Ramatuelle was destroyed following the Wars of Religion. This new place of worship, built around the year 1582, was built against the rampart which surrounded the village in order to save on the construction of a wall. But, in the decades that followed, the Ramatuellois were forced to address numerous complaints to the bishop of Fréjus, because the prior refused to pay its share of the work. The roof had not been completed, so in bad weather it rained into the church and this prevented the celebration of "divine worship". It was only in the first years of the 17th century that the church was completed with the opening of the large door dated 1620. To the right of the entrance, a plaque commemorates the memory of the crews of four submarines, namely "the SM 2326", "the Sybille", "the Minerve" and "the Eurydice", which disappeared off Cape Camarat between 1946 and 1970.



# *Activities throughout the summer*

## **Provençal market**

Thursdays and Sundays throughout the year, Place de l'Ormeau.

## **Guided tour of the heart of Ramatuelle**

Learn about the treasures and secrets of the alleys of the old village, open your ears to the tales and legends of the region...

Free village tour, upon registration. Duration: 1:30 hours

Meet in front of the Tourist Office at 9:15 am. Departure at 9:30 am.

## **Festivals**

Renowned festivals share the summer stages. Classical, jazz and variety music have for many years been performed by artists to dazzle ever more followers in the sumptuous decor of the Théâtre de Verdure.



The event originally aimed to promote this small Provençal village, renowned for its beauty and the protection of its sites. Twenty years later, the reputation of the Ramatuelle Festival is firmly established as one of the great events of the summer season.

Every summer, Ramatuelle welcomes a fine selection of jazzmen and blue note ladies for a swinging festival. The "Twist in Saint-Tropez!", hit of the yé-yé years (taken from the English "yeah! Yeah!"), is now rather old hat. Today, we say "Jazz in Ramatuelle!"



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